



Kenneth A. Gibson

MAYOR

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

07102

FOR RELEASE SUNDAY, MAY 4, 1975

CONTACT: BERNARD MOORE
733-3687

**MAYOR KENNETH A. GIBSON'S STATEMENT TO THE NEW JERSEY
STATE SENATE ON THE NEED FOR STRONGER EMPLOYMENT
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR MINORITIES**

"I want to strongly urge your support of A-2227, an act relating to affirmative action in relation to discrimination in connection with certain public contracts and supplementing the "Law Against Discrimination.

"It is clear to me that given the current state of the economy nationally and especially in New Jersey, minorities are faced with overwhelming difficulties as they attempt to obtain employment. Traditionally this group has had to accept the fact that our society, although eschewing public assistance, has denied many who currently receive welfare from effectively participating in the labor market.

"Without question job discrimination exists in New Jersey and is especially the case in the state's construction industry. I hope you feel as I do, that we must face this issue frontally and reject the systematic exclusion of minorities that has been practiced in the building and trades industry in our State.

"A-2227 would mandate affirmative action on all construction contracts on behalf of the State, any county, municipality or other political subdivision of the State, or any agency or authority created by any of the above. It would further preclude discrimination by the suppliers of materials and equipment related to construction.

-more-

add one

"It is my belief that in a democratic country, founded on the principle of equal justice for all, those who are given the opportunity to give meaning to this principle will do so.

"As Mayor of New Jersey's largest city, a city faced with a staggering unemployment problem which is disproportionately borne by minorities, I urge you to vote "yes" when this bill is considered on the Senate floor.

"Due to the losses suffered by the minority groups as a result of the current depression and the "last hired first fired" hardship pressed minorities, it is necessary that any upswing in the economy take into account that we must undo what negative economic conditions have done. Equal employment opportunity for minorities is not a favor, it is a long outstanding debt.